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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Woodville Church marks two centuries

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The red brick church, perched on a grassy rise on the edge of downtown Woodville, gives the impression of solidity and timelessness.

The bricks themselves show the handiwork of men long since faded from memory; they have the mottled and slightly irregular look of craftsmanship done with simple tools of a bygone day.

The green shutters close to keep worshippers out of the heat; the pristine cupola adds the perfect touch to a simple meeting house.

The occupants of this particular meeting house have quite a story to tell.

"I've been waiting to preach here for 200 years," quipped Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, on hand for the bicentennial celebration of the Woodville Church, Woodville, on October 15.

He was joined by former pastors and staff, men who were ordained to the ministry in the church, plus scores of past and present members.

As befitting such a significant anniversary, the morning session was a combination of historical remembrance and future vision-casting.

The morning worship service included Alton Foster, associational director of missions for Mississippi Association in Liberty; Futral; and Gary Bunch, Woodville Church pastor.

After the morning worship service the church provided lunch for everyone present, and the day ended with a pageant, "Two Centuries of Serving the Lord of the Harvest."

Several historical vignettes portraying the life of the church were presented by many of the church members, including a treacherous trip down the Mississippi, the relocation of the church to Woodville, and even a scene of church discipline.

"That was a hoot," one of the youth commented.

While Futral obviously wasn't around for the beginnings of Woodville Church, he did pay homage to the significant role the church played among Mississippi Baptists.

"In many ways, it's the mother church of us all," he said. "When the Curtis, Ogden, and Perkins families settled in this area, they brought the beginnings of Mississippi Baptists with them."

In 1780, a handful of families made their way from South Carolina to a primitive area of the Natchez country to begin a new life on what was to be known as Cole's Creek. The families of Richard Curtis, Sr., Daniel Ogden, the Perkins family and probably James Cole were some of the first settlers of the Mississippi Valley.

After building their homes, the families met for worship. Richard Curtis, Jr., already a licensed preacher, was called to be pastor of the fledgling congregation.

This community and church became known as Salem.

In 1800 another church, beginning as an arm of Salem Church, was constituted about four miles southwest of current Woodville. It was begun by members of the Ogden family and others. It was known at that time as Bethel Church.

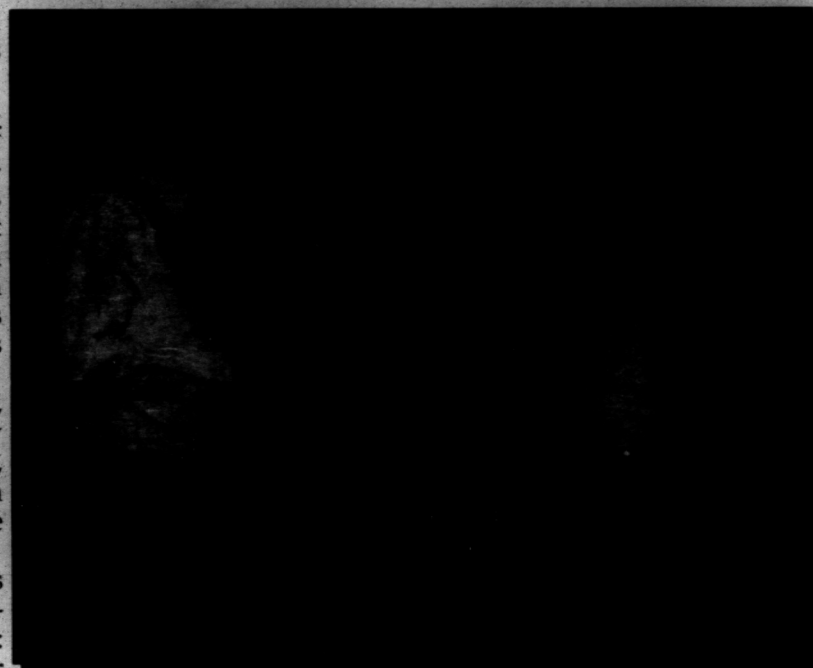
In 1806 this church, along with Salem, New Hope, New Providence, and Ebenezer, met on Cole's Creek to organize Mississippi Association.

Bethel Church was instrumental in establishing three other associations: the Mississippi River Baptist Association in 1843; back to the Mississippi Association in 1853; and the Carey Association in 1885.

Ultimately the church returned to Mississippi Association.

Bethel Church moved to Woodville in 1853. There was a preexisting church building in Woodville known as the Baptist Meeting House, built in 1809, and the Woodville-Bethel congregation took it over.

The congregation found the building in a serious state of disrepair. Ferns and moss



REMEMBERING THE PAST — Paul Randall (left) and Ricky Gray, members of Woodville Church, Woodville, share a historical vignette depicting the move of the Bethel Church to Woodville. The pair performed during their church's bicentennial celebration on October 15. (Photo by Tony Martin)

grew in the windowsills; cattle may have even been stored in the building. At one point in the 1890's, the building was condemned as unsafe, but by 1914 the church had been thoroughly renovated and repaired and has been in use ever since.

As with most churches, Woodville Bethel Church had its conflicts. By 1856, the membership of the church was 47, — 21 white and 26 black.

In March of that year, Jerry Miller was charged with "Blasphemous (sic) language, and Hunting on Sunday." On April 20, the church excluded Miller.

In November 1860, Sisters Viola and Elizabeth Montgomery were found guilty of dancing, but after asking forgiveness of the church, were duly forgiven.

In 1882, membership was down to nine members; according to the minutes, "there had been no preaching in the church for several years, and on account of the removal of some of the members and back sliding in others the old Woodville Bethel church became practically unorganized."

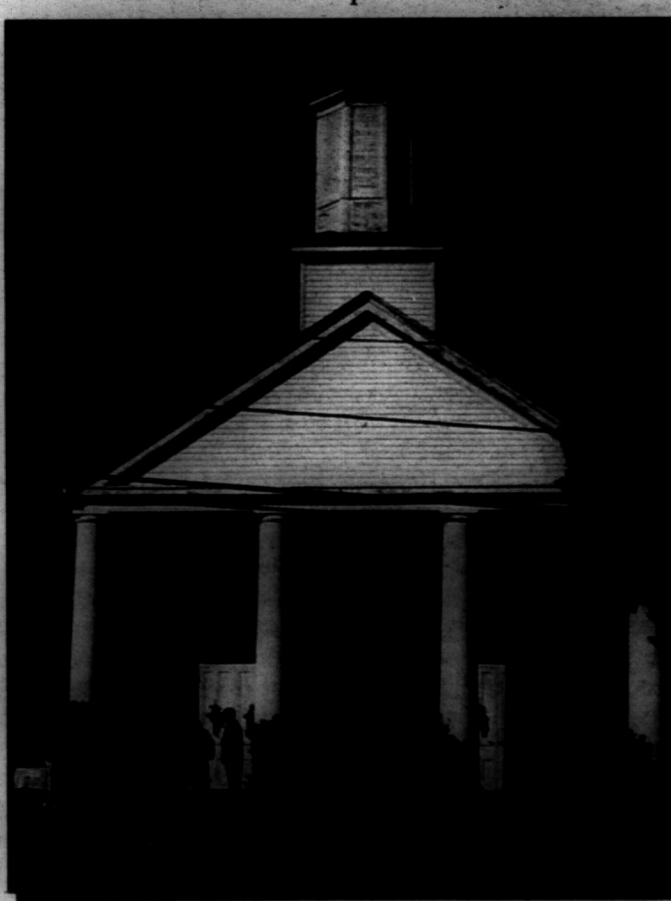
Since 1920, however, the membership has steadily progressed.

The church has ministered in various ways during the ensuing years. A "Sabbath School" was begun in 1853 on an irregular basis. A permanent Sunday School was begun in 1911.

The state's first Ladies' Missions Society began at Bethel, the seeds for the current Woman's Missionary Union.

Woodville Church began the Fort Adams Mission in 1980, just recently constituted as a church — the newest church in the oldest association.

"This is a good, stable, healthy church," Bunch said. "Of course, we face many of the same challenges of other churches, like reaching young couples, but we're doing fine."



CHURCH TODAY — The Woodville Church building of today is the modern descendent of the original church built around 1806, which was in sporadic use by other groups until Woodville-Bethel Church occupied it in 1854. (Photo by Tony Martin)

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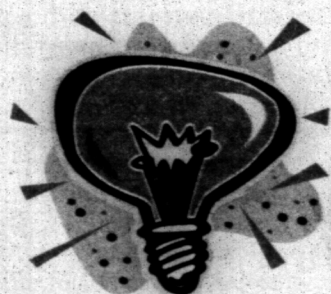
REMINDER!

Daylight Savings

Time ends at

2 a.m. on

Sunday, October 29



Don't be late
for church!

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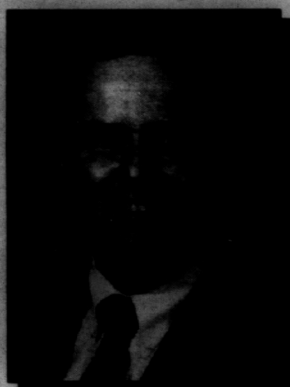
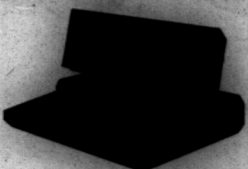
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The meaning of brotherhood

brotherhood - 1. the quality or state of being brothers. 2. fellowship, alliance. 3. an association for a particular purpose. 4. the whole body of persons engaged in business or profession.

— Webster's Ninth New
Collegiate Dictionary

Brotherhood, at least as the word is formally defined in the dictionary, is in awfully short supply right now around the world and here at home.

As Palestinians hold high their blood-soaked hands to celebrate yet another death in the ranks of their sworn enemy, Israelis believe they are justified in retaliating with overwhelming force to avenge the brutality visited upon their country's citizens.

At a seaport in the small country of Yemen on the edge of the Saudi Arabian peninsula — split until a few years ago by a deadly civil war of its own — a pair of "martyrs" destroy themselves in order to destroy 17 innocent lives and tear asunder untold families.

In Burundi and Rwanda on the African continent, infants and children are hacked to death with machetes simply because they are members of the wrong tribe by accident of birth.

Christians in the north African nation of Sudan are routinely tortured and killed before the eyes of their children, who are then sold in sexual slavery around the Arab world.

The tiny island of Ambon off the coast of Indonesia, so small that it doesn't even appear on most general maps of the world, is gripped by murderous violence as heavily-armed Muslim jihad warriors vow to wipe out Christian believers.

America hasn't escaped the ravages brought on by a lack of brotherhood, either.

Chart-topping rap music boasts of killing cops, and raping and mutilating women, who run afoul of modern-day common criminals who fancy themselves as "gangstas." Television and movies likewise glorify the deadly gangsta lifestyle.

I once stood behind a backstop watching a friend umpire a children's tee-ball game. The kids were as cute as they could be, but the parents were something else.

At one point, a kid was tagged out at home plate. Yet, a run was added to the scoreboard. Between innings, I asked my friend the umpire about that. "I did call him out," he said, "but it angered the parents so much, I decided to let it count. I don't need the grief these adults can dish out."

Recently, we all heard of a father who killed the coach of his children's hockey team because he did not care for the way the game was being run. In Florida not long ago, a fight involving more than a hundred parents, coaches, and players broke out when one side scored a disputed touchdown. Do you get the impression that some people lose their perspective at their children's ball games?

The legendary Yankee catcher Yogi Berra watched as a batter stepped up to the plate and made the sign of the cross. Yogi said, "Hey, friend, why don't we just let the Lord enjoy the

It's sad but true that a baseball cap turned in the wrong direction can be a death sentence on some city streets in this country.

Mississippians are apparently unable to talk civilly about a subject as simple as the future of the state flag, preferring instead to hurl cynical insults and childish accusations at each other.

Even Southern Baptists cannot get along, much to the dismay of those of us who grew up in the generations when Southern Baptists were the most monolithic, focused evangelism/mission-sending group the world had ever seen.

As the Baptist General Convention of Texas seeks a unilateral divorce from the Southern Baptist Convention, denominational leaders spend thousands of Cooperative Program dollars — given by you and me for the work of the Lord — on slick, expensive brochures and Internet web sites designed to trash Texas Baptist leaders who oppose them.

Whatever happened to the concept of brotherhood — all of us acting as brothers in a fellowship that will advance our particular purpose of winning the world to Jesus?

Maybe all these warring groups should come to Jackson, Mississippi, next week to see what brotherhood is all about. They should attend the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

It is at the Mississippi Baptist Convention that the belligerents will see people from the far reaches of the state, rural/urban/suburban alike, declaring in a single unified voice their intention to bring Mississippi (and the world) to Jesus.

That's not to imply there won't be disagreements or expressions of different viewpoints. Someone may get their feelings hurt when messengers don't adopt

"WE'RE LOOKING FOR A CHURCH HOME — BUT MOSTLY, WE'RE LOOKING FOR A HOME."



their idea by acclamation.

Possibly a person's candidate for convention office will be defeated. Perhaps someone won't be selected to serve on the committee he/she really wanted.

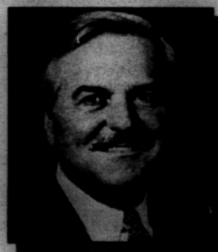
Be absolutely certain of one fact, however, — when Mississippi Baptists depart their convention they will have resolutely declared for the 165th time that nothing is more important to them than accomplishing our Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

They will put aside petty differences (what isn't petty compared to the Great Commission?) and go forth to make a difference in this world for Jesus.

To do so will require courage, commitment, sacrifice, and a demonstration of the true meaning of brotherhood.

May the Lord bless our efforts.

GUEST OPINION:



It's just a game

By Joe N. McKeever, pastor
First Church, Kenner, La.

game!" That seems to me the question of the hour: why don't we just let people enjoy the game — because that's all it is.

Somewhere I heard of a Nebraska fan who lives and dies by his team's fortunes, who had the name of the school engraved on his teeth, and who had even gone so far as to purchase a casket for himself in his school colors. When asked what he thought of this, one of the school's coaches said, "I think he needs to get a life." Often the coaches and players have the game in better perspective than their fans.

In November 1953, as the University of Texas and Baylor University gathered on the field for their annual football game, Pastor Blake Smith of

Austin's University Baptist Church prayed the invocation. Those who heard him that day never forgot the prayer.

Dear God,

It is clear that Thou has given us life with many different shades and colors. For this we are grateful. We humbly accept the fact that some things in our lives are not very important. They are to be enjoyed but not taken too seriously. The occasion that brings us together today is one of those happy interludes in life. Help us to accept it as such.

In thy presence we know that no issues of great importance are going to be settled here this afternoon. No souls are going to be lost or saved by the final figures on the scoreboard. No great cause is at stake. It is one of those pleasures which Thou has

meant for Thy children to enjoy. Do not let us spoil it by forgetting that it is just a game to be enjoyed today, talked about tomorrow, and forgotten the day afterward. Keep us mindful of this, dear God, for we are human and we easily lose our perspective and allow the things that are most important to become the victims of the things important. Amen.

That prayer should be offered before every meet, contest, game, race, match, and bout, at every level from little league to the Olympics to the pros.

Someone somewhere needs to inject some sanity into sport, to remind the spectators and participants that in real life what we are doing here today amounts to zero, zip, nada, absolutely nothing. This is fun time, let-your-hair-down-and-relax time. If our side wins, fine; if the other side wins, no problem — because it's just a game.

Source of information on Smith's prayer: Trinity Trumpet newsletter, Trinity Church, San Antonio, Texas.

McKeever served a number of churches in Mississippi, and is the longtime editorial cartoonist for The Baptist Record.

Missionaries appointed for church-planting

WOODSTOCK, Ga. (BP) — An October 1 commissioning service gave North American missionary Vance Pitman an opportunity to share with his sponsoring congregation how God had called him to lead a church-planting team in Las Vegas.

the unmistakable call that God was leading him and his wife, Kristie, to something different. "We said 'yes,'" he said.

It was a few weeks later that they received the call from Johnny Hunt, pastor of the Woodstock Church, asking him

"Have you said yes? Has God called you to places? That doesn't mean you have to pack up and go to Las Vegas, or Boston, or Philadelphia, or Chicago. But have you said yes? I pray tonight that if you haven't, you will."

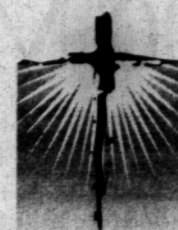
The church plant in Las Vegas is part of the North American Mission Board's Strategic Focus Cities evangelism and church planting emphasis, which will focus on Boston and Las Vegas next year and Seattle and Philadelphia in 2002.

For Alanna Davis, it was a similar shaping process by God that brought her from success in network television to her current role as a lay church planter among upscale professionals in Boston. After accepting Christ she suffered a series of professional and personal setbacks, including having her financial assets embezzled and being

He also told the story of another man's commitment to the call God made on his life to tell the people of China about the good news of Christ. William Borden, heir to the Borden dairy corporation, had accepted Christ while on an around-the-world cruise with a friend. The friend arranged for Borden to meet and hear stories from missionaries at every port.

Borden gave up leadership of his family's company to obey God's call, telling his parents, "The job isn't big enough. I've got to see people come to Jesus as Savior. That's the job (to which) God is calling me."

When he became stricken with a fatal illness in Cairo dur-



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE



SENT WITH PRAYER — Members of First Church, Woodstock, Ga., pray for missionaries Jeff and Myra Riley during a North American Mission Board commissioning service in early October. The Rileys are serving as planters on the staff of a new church plant in Las Vegas. (BP photo)

In a service marked with celebratory worship, fervent prayer, and profound gratefulness to God, Pitman joined 69 other missionaries — a total of 33 couples and four single missionaries — being commissioned as church planter interns by the North American Mission Board at the Atlanta-area First Church of Woodstock.

Pitman told of how he had been humbled through a bad experience at a previous church, and how one morning he felt

to consider being pastor of the Las Vegas congregation. It was confirmation of God's call.

"During that period ... I told Kristie, 'I think I need to be under some godly men for a while to be healed,'" he said. "And since I had such a strong pastor's heart, there were only two men I would be willing to serve under — and that's my dad and Johnny Hunt," he said.

His challenge for the congregation was for the same sort of openness to God's call.

The experiences made her realize the needs even among the affluent for a relationship with God.

"Underneath their disguises of sociability and success ... they too hurt and fear and are alone, and I know how they feel," she said. "God has given me my heart's desire. ... What man intended for evil, God intended for good."

Robert E. Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board, shared with the congregation how God's call throughout the Bible was just as personal. God called his servants by name, he said, from Noah and Abram in the Old Testament to Zacchaeus and Saul in the New Testament.

"He's calling every one of us by name. And he says, 'I have a plan for you,'" Reccord said.

Reccord told how God's call on the lives of a string of leaders called by God — beginning with the Sunday School teacher who led D.L. Moody to Christ — resulted in the profession of faith and subsequent ministry of evangelist Billy Graham.

ing language school, he remained faithful. A piece of paper found near his body after his death contained his last six words, "No reserve, no regret, no retreat."

"Tonight, can you say, 'No reserve, I'm not holding on to anything except [God]; no retreat, I'm not sorry for what I gave up for one minute...,'" Reccord said.

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NEWLY APPOINTED — North American Mission Board President Robert E. Reccord (left) presents a certificate of appointment to church planters Brett and Lacey Maragni during the early October commissioning service at First Church, Woodstock, Ga. The Maragnis are serving as church planters in Orange Park, Fla. (BP photo)

Channel One restricts ads

WASHINGTON (BP) — On the heels of a Federal Trade Commission report and contentious appearances by Hollywood producers before the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee, an organization that provides a daily news program for school students announced it was ahead of the curve on curbing the airing of advertisements

for R-rated and PG-13-rated

movies to underage children — and the network gave Southern Baptists at least partial credit for increasing its sensitivity to the issue of marketing movies and other teen-related products to the nearly 8 million students in the schools it serves.

Channel One, a private network that airs a 12-minute newscast to 12,000 middle, junior, and high schools each

day, has never aired advertisements for R-rated movies or M-rated games and over a year ago began to screen ads for PG-13 movies to determine their appropriateness for a high school student-only audience, reported a Channel One executive. In exchange for providing schools televisions and video-cassette recorders,

and a dish to pull down the network's signal, Channel One asks teachers to begin each class day viewing their youth-focused news program.

A study conducted by the Parents Television Council of advertisements during television's so-called "family hour" — between 8 and 9 p.m. Eastern time — revealed that 83% of the ads for movies during that time were for R-rated films.

Channel One Network

2000 Mississippi Baptist Convention schedule

MONDAY, OCTOBER 30

• Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association fall luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Ridgecrest Church, Madison. \$12.00 per person. Contact Lewis Harrell, First Church, Indianola, at (662) 887-2241.

• Ministers' Wives Conference, 1 p.m., fifth floor of First Church, Jackson. Contact Kay McDonnell, (601) 292-3305 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 305. E-mail: kmcdonnell@mbcb.org.

• Mississippi Baptist Pastors Conference afternoon session, 1:30 p.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

• Lay Missions Conference, 3 p.m., First Church, Brandon. Contact Gail Wood, (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: gwood@mbcb.org.

• Lay Missions banquet. \$8.50 per person (reservations required). Contact Gail Wood, (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: gwood@mbcb.org.

• Mississippi Baptist Pastors Conference evening session, 6:30 p.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31

• Annuitants breakfast, 7:30 a.m., First Church, Jackson. Contact Robin Nichols, (601) 292-3226 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 226. E-mail: rnichols@mbcb.org.

• Mississippi College Christian Service alumni continental breakfast, 7:30 a.m., First Church, Jackson, Fellowship Hall West. Contact Lance Clay, director of Alumni Affairs, at (601) 925-3000. E-mail: clay@mc.edu.

Mississippi Baptist Convention first session, 8:25 a.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

• Mississippi College School of Nursing, in conjunction with Baptist Health Systems, Inc., will offer a Health Fair from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on the fourth floor of First Church, Jackson. Total cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, glaucoma, hearing, and hemoglobin screenings will be provided at no charge. Flu shots will cost \$6.

• Southwestern Seminary alumni luncheon, 11:45 a.m., Calvary Church, Jackson. \$8.00 per person. Contact David Wills or Linda Reeves, (601) 292-3298 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 298. E-mail: dwills@mbcb.org.

• Southern Seminary alumni luncheon, noon, Baptist Building Skyroom. \$6 per person at the door. Contact Jimmy Porter, (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 329. E-mail: jporter@mbcb.org.

• Mid-America Seminary alumni luncheon, noon, Denney's Restaurant, 330 Greymont Ave., Jackson. \$12.50 per person. No reservations necessary. Contact David Sapp, (662) 473-4447.

• New Orleans Seminary alumni luncheon, noon, First Church, Jackson. \$10.00 per person. Contact Ben James at (662) 326-3928 or NOBTS Alumni office at (504) 282-4455, ext. 3291.

Mississippi Baptist Convention second session, 1:30 p.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

• Chaplains fall banquet, 4:45 p.m., Baptist Building Skyroom, Jackson. \$8.50 per person if non-member. Contact Elaine Smith (601) 292-3361 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 361. E-mail: esmith@mbcb.org.

• Blue Mountain College ministerial alumni association dinner, 5:30 p.m., Galloway United Methodist Church, Jackson. Tickets available at door or at the Blue Mountain College booth. Contact Blue Mountain College Alumni Office at (662) 685-4771.

Mississippi Baptist Convention third session, 6:30 p.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

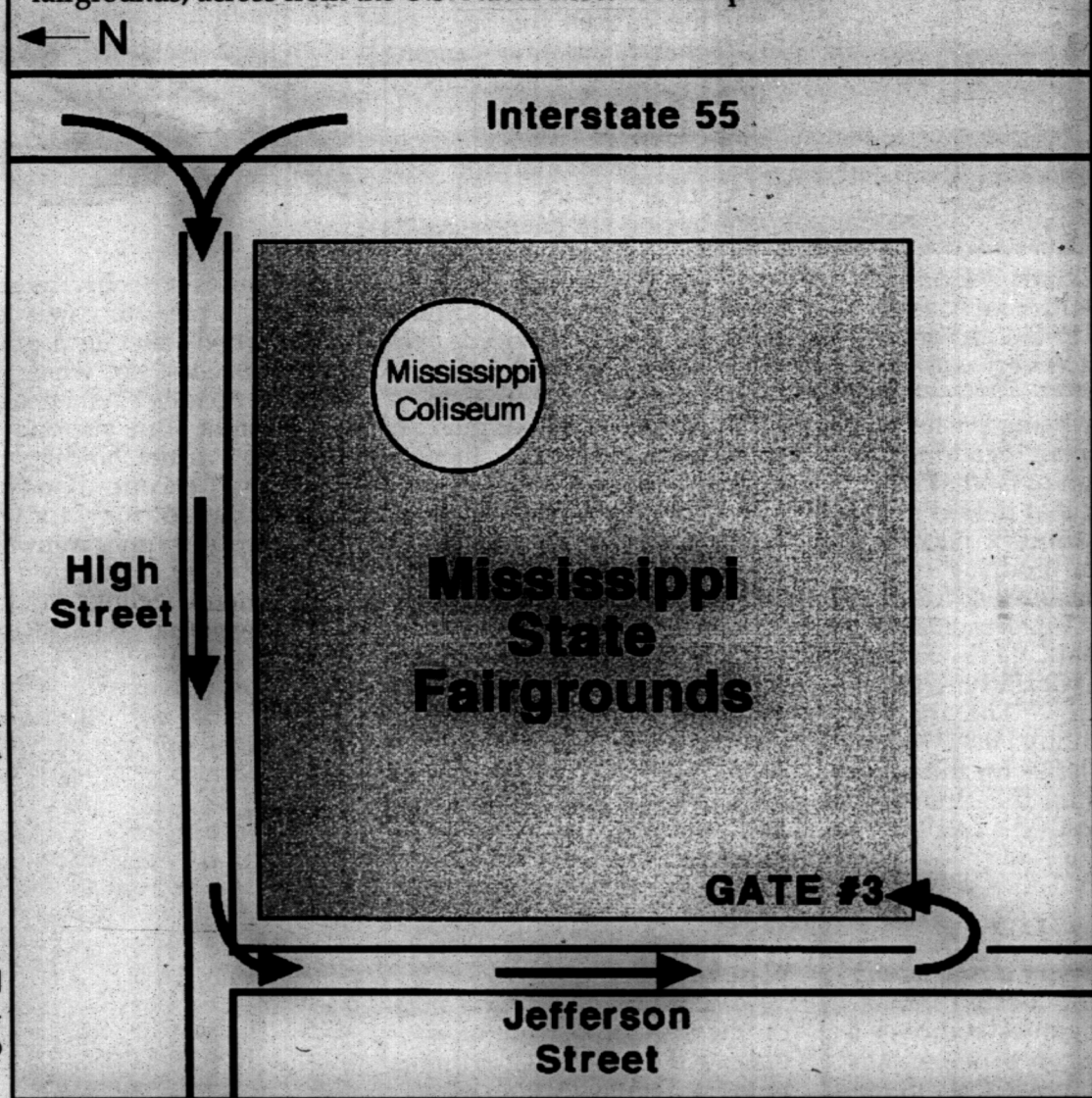
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

• Bivocational Ministers Fellowship breakfast, 7:00 a.m., Baptist Building Chapel, Jackson. Contact Matt Buckles (601) 292-3308 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 308. E-mail: mbuckles@mbcb.org.

Mississippi Baptist Convention, fourth session, 8:25 a.m., sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.

MBC parking plan announced

Due to ongoing major construction in the parking lots of First Church, Jackson, people attending the Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference on October 30 and the Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting on October 31-November 1 are strongly encouraged to park in the secured area at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds just off Jefferson Street, and take the shuttle service to the conference. Attendees should enter at gate number three at the southwest corner of the fairgrounds, across from the U.S. Naval Reserve headquarters.



REGISTRATION

Registration for the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Convention annual meeting will be on the second floor above the State Street entrance of First Church, Jackson. Volunteers from First Church, Jackson, will begin registering messengers at 12 noon on Monday, October 30. Registration will resume at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, October 31, and Wednesday, November 1.

CONVENTION OFFICE

The convention office will be located across from the registration area (see above). Incoming messages will be received at (601) 949-1924, and will be posted at the convention office. An outgoing telephone line will be available for local and long distance (credit card only) calls. Lost and Found will be located at the convention office.

PARKING

Due to ongoing major construction in the parking lots surrounding First Church, Jackson, convention-goers are strongly encouraged to park in the secured area at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds just off Jefferson Street, and take the shuttle service to the convention. Convention-goers should proceed on Jefferson Street and enter at gate number three across from the Naval Reserve headquarters. Shuttle service will start before the first session of the 2000 Mississippi Baptist Pastors Conference, which begins at 1:30 p.m. on October 30, and will end two hours after the convention adjourns at 11:25 a.m. on November 1. Due to construction and heavy traffic, convention-goers are urged to cross streets only at designated crosswalks. The Skywalk over State Street will not be available. Convention-goers are also cautioned against overparking on meters and illegal parking; tickets issued by the City of Jackson Police Department cannot be forgiven, and improperly parked automobiles may be towed. Most of the area parking lots that are privately owned or owned by government entities are reserved for employees; parking in those reserved lots is not recommended.

DISPLAY AREA

The display area and the LifeWay Christian Resources bookstore will be located in Fellowship Hall West on the ground level floor of First Church, Jackson.

CHILDCARE

Preschool childcare is available for ages birth through five, beginning with the Pastor's Conference on October 30 and continuing through each session of the convention. Preschool area is located street level at the drive-under on the northeast corner of the main church building, just off North State Street. Procedure is as follows: 1. Register each child by name, parent, and church. 2. Obtain security card for each child at registration. 3. Label all belongings. 4. For infants, advise childcare workers of feeding schedule. 5. Childcare opens 20 minutes before each session starts and closes 20 minutes after each session ends. Children may remain in preschool area during the convention lunch break on Tuesday, October 31, if parents provide lunch for each of their children.

Mississippians answer Bolivia prayer needs

By Cynthia Broome, member
First Church, Clinton

A year ago as the eyes of the world focused on the earthquake disaster in Turkey, another calamity was enveloping east-central Bolivia. Wildfires raced through the fields and villages of the Guarayo people, destroying more than 500 homes and leaving more than 3,000 people homeless.

Even before the fires were out, Mississippians were alerted to the tragedy. Three Mississippi natives, Tom and Cynthia Martin and Trey Wooton, form the Guarayo Team.

They live and work among the Guarayos as representatives of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Utilizing e-mail, the Martins and Wooton notified a group of individuals and churches across the state and immediately hundreds of people began praying for the Guarayos.

Once the fires were out, Tom Martin said, "The Guarayos faced a onslaught of physical and spiritual needs."

Mississippians were quick to respond to those needs, contributing \$4,000 to a special Bolivian Disaster Recovery Fund established by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

In the area around Ascencion de Guarayos, the fires destroyed more than 1,000 acres of crop lands, as well as the seeds and farm implements needed for planting. Martin used Southern Baptist World Hunger Relief

funds to purchase 10 pounds of corn seed and 10 pounds of rice to distribute to 237 of the hardest-hit families.

By January 2000, before the crops could be harvested, there was little food in the village of Urubicha, where the Martins and Wooton live. The remaining funds from Mississippi provided three tons of food to sustain 153 families as they waited for their harvest.

"The disaster has opened the hearts of the people in the Guarayo area," Martin said. "As I distributed food and other goods to the Guarayo people, I made them aware that God was behind it all. For six months, no one gave me thanks for anything. I shall never forget the first time a Guarayo woman told me 'God bless you.' For me, that was a spiritual breakthrough."

The local Baptist church distributed more than 1,000 Spanish Bibles and 300 Guarayo New Testaments. Fifty people made professions of faith and were baptized.

Working with the Guarayos has made team members aware of other needs in their villages, including a lack of medical care. Volunteers from the Magnolia State are planning a medical mission trip to San Pablo, Bolivia, in March of 2001.

Heading this group is Ken Moss, a layman from First Church in Natchez, Cynthia Martin's home church. Members of Tom Martin's home church, First Church in Yazoo City, are also involved in this effort.

The team believes the prayers of fellow Mississippians are laying the foundation

for meeting the spiritual needs of the Guarayos. The prayer effort is two-pronged, involving prayer walking and prayer partnering.

Prayer partnerships have been formed between the Guarayo Team and a number of individuals and churches across the state. First Church in Richland and First Church in Natchez have been recognized as Global Priority Churches by IMB, meaning each has met the requirements to officially adopt the Guarayos.

First Church in Yazoo City and the 62 churches of Scott-Newton Association have also partnered with the Guarayo Team in prayer efforts. In addition, individuals and groups within other Mississippi churches have answered the call to prayer, either for the ministry as a whole or for specific Guarayo villages.

While the wildfires brought tragedy, they also brought opportunity. Tom Martin is thankful for the prayers and financial support of his fellow Mississippians.

"As we began to see God at work through this disaster," he said, "we were overcome by God's goodness and faithfulness. We saw prayers answered."

The disaster recovery effort has begun to wind down, but the physical and spiritual needs of the Guarayos continue.

Anyone who wants to join the prayer partnership or to learn more about the Martin's ministry can visit the Guarayo Team website at www.byhisgrace.com/Wooton.

Burger to perform at First, Brandon

Anthony Burger, internationally-acclaimed pianist for the Gaither Vocal Band and their Homecoming video series, will perform at 7 p.m. on October 26 at First Church, Brandon.



Burger

Burger was the youngest student ever accepted to the University of Tennessee's Cadec Conservatory of Music, and has performed at the White House. He received Singing News Magazine's Favorite Musician Award for ten consecutive years, after which it was named the Anthony Burger Award. He twice received Gospel Voice magazine's Instrumentalist Award and has been named Musician of the year three times by the Southern Gospel Music Association. Burger has also performed as part of three Billy Graham Crusades.

There is no admission charge for this event. A love offering will be taken. For more information, contact First Church, Brandon, at (601) 825-6766.

IF MY PEOPLE...WILL VOTE

We are only days away from "Election 2000." It seems to me that the candidates have been running for office since the early 1980's! The campaign just goes on, and on, and on. Now, it is time for the people to decide — it is time to vote!

Voting is a cherished gift of democracy. While millions of people around the world cannot envision a society in which they can express themselves or have input to shape their own destiny and select their own leaders, many here in America choose not to participate in the process.

Some say their vote will not count and that it doesn't make a difference whether they vote or not. That is not true and your ballot does make a difference! Here in America it is our privilege to participate in a plan of self-government. On a four-year cycle, the election process brings about an orderly revolution.

It is important for everyone to participate, but even with the vote being as important as it is, there are some things of greater importance.

When God spoke to his people in 2 Chron. 7:14, he did not say, "If my people, which are called by my name, will vote..." For the Christian, there are things that exceed the ballot box — things which, as the election approaches, we cannot forget.

God names the things that we ought to do and then he says that he will heal the land. While this is an important vote, the issues outlined by God are more important.

"If my people will humble themselves..." Humility is a lost spiritual commodity in our day. "We will bow to no one!"



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

"We have a right and we are strong enough that nobody will rub our noses in the dirt!" Yet, God calls for humility within his people. A humble spirit eradicates self-centeredness, pushy-positioning, and arrogance. A humble spirit recognizes our true position of frailty apart from the strength of the God who made us.

We have nothing about which to be boastful and everything about which to be dependent.

"If my people will pray..." We should declare November 6 a day of prayer. While we vote on the 7th, wouldn't it be remarkable if churches across our land opened their doors, not for a preaching and praise service, but simply for people to come and pray — really pray! Praying — not just ordering God to do what we think ought to be done, but asking God what he would have us to do.

I know that prayer is taboo in the schoolrooms. Prayer is not even supposed to make its appearance at football games. Yet, you know, the only people who can stop us from praying is us!

I am somewhat amazed by the fact that judges, politicians, and legislative folks seem to know about the power of prayer more than the people of God do. Join me and join others on November 6th and pray.

"If my people will seek my face..." What a beautiful, incredible picture this is of the people of God turned toward him, looking into his face and waiting to respond to do whatever he would desire.

In Matthew 18:10, Jesus describes the angels encircling the throne of God and he says that they, "do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven."

The picture that Jesus describes is of the host of angels who sit with anticipation and expectation, and are poised and ready to respond at the very notion that God wants them to do something. No doubt, God looks for the same kind of willing, ready, obedient hearts within us.

"If my people will turn from their wicked ways..." I do not believe that God has a list of two or three wicked ways, but whatever it may be in your life or mine that God has shown us, convicted us, corralled us, and

convinced us needs to be changed, we need to turn.

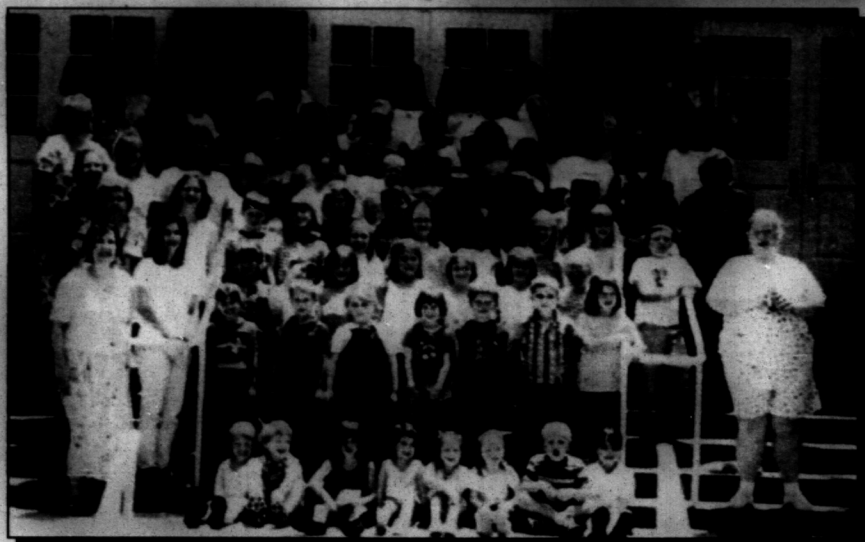
Wicked ways can be terrible, outward, overt sins that the whole world can see, or wicked ways can be internalized, hostile, hateful feelings, and even our perpetual bad attitudes. God says, "Turn!"

While millions are speculating on what will happen if the vote turns out one way or the other, I wonder what would happen if we, the people of God, truly listened to him and responded even before we voted. According to Scripture, we could look for a new land to be shaped under the guidance and plan of God.

Catching up on business



Dale Little (left), associational missions director for Adams Association in Natchez, and Ken Lyle, contract consultant for the Partnership Mission Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), share a moment during the Associational Missions Director/MBCB Staff Prayer Retreat at Camp Garywa in Clinton on October 5-6. Approximately 40 associational mission directors participated in the two-day event. (Photo by Larry Martin)



Vacation Bible School (pictured) was held June 5-9 at First Church, Crystal Springs, with 176 in attendance. Angie Mosley was director.

BHS announces new OCU

Baptist Health Systems has announced the opening of a new outpatient cardiopulmonary unit (OCU), which will provide a variety of heart- and lung-related services on an outpatient basis. The new unit, which opened in September, will allow patients to receive all their cardiac and pulmonary care in one central location. In addition, patients can come to the OCU for assessment before their scheduled procedure, can be admitted and discharged directly from the unit, and can pre-register for future procedures.

Steve Jackson, director of Baptist Heart Services, noted that a number of procedures will be available at the OCU, including diagnostic cardiac catheterizations, pacemaker implantations, stent and balloon angioplasties, and bronchoscopies. He added that advances in medical technology have made it possible to perform many of these services in an outpatient setting, without requiring an overnight hospital stay.

For more information about the OCU, or about Baptist's low-cost heart screening program, call Baptist's Health Line at (601) 948-6262 or (800) 948-6262.

Strong Hope Church, Wesson, held its WMU Recognition Service on Aug. 6. Mission Friends pictured are (from left) Meagan Berch; Brandon Runyan; Jessa Martin; Brianna Savage; and Morgan Acy; (second row) Lesa Williams, leader; Noah Martin; Karen Middleton, leader; Paige Lewis; Pam Moore, leader; and Tina Acy, leader; not pictured, Brice Runyan and Blake Runyan.

GAs are (first row) Katie McGee; Georgia Bowlin; Katlynn Savage; Jessica Jackson; and Christina Bates; (second

row) Wanda McGee, leader; Amber Morgan; Corey Bates; Kelli Ryan; Ashlee Mullins; and Penny Martin, leader.

RAs are (first row) Dylan Berch, Adam Williams, and Micheal Middleton; (second row) Aaron Cagle, Benton Bell, Clay Bowlin, and Ben Head.

Acteens are Maggie Morgan; Crystal Ryan; Janie Jackson, leader; Amanda Jackson; Heather Morgan; and Mandi Elkins; not pictured, Beth Ryan.

Youth on Missions are Cathy Ryan, leader; Mandi Elkins; Amanda Jackson; Crystal Ryan; Maggie Morgan; Heather Morgan; Bradley Middleton; Wesley Page; Scott Mullins; Earl Bell; Corey Gemilli; Brent Holly, leader; and Holly Ferguson; not pictured, Heather Bowlin, leader.

The 37th Santa Rosa Reunion will be held at First Church, Nicholson, at 1 p.m. on Nov. 12. Santa Rosa Church was organized as a mission on Nov. 21, 1947. The mission entered the Pearl River Association on Oct. 2, 1949. In 1963 the church was forced to disband and the government gave the church \$42,500 for the property. After all debts were paid the church had a balance of \$36,171.53. This was set up in the "First Baptist Church of Santa Rosa Memorial Trust Fund" with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. The interest each year goes to the Cooperative Program. The Santa Rosa reunion is always held the second Sunday in November. For more information call Irma K. Frierson at (601) 798-6306.



Mission Friends of Strong Hope Church, Wesson



GAs of Strong Hope Church, Wesson



RAs of Strong Hope Church, Wesson



Acteens of Strong Hope Church, Wesson



Youth on Mission of Strong Hope Church, Wesson

The Kilgore Sisters will be in concert at Holcomb Church, North Central Association, on Sunday, Oct. 29, at 6 p.m. Randy Ashley is pastor.

Good Hope Church, Leake Association, will have Harvest Day on Oct. 29. Sunday School will be held at 10 a.m. with worship at 11 a.m. Wayne McGee, pastor, will bring the message. Lunch will follow the morning worship service.

The Hennington Family will be in concert at Park Haven Church, Laurel, Oct. 29 at 6 p.m.

Fall Festival will be held at Country Woods Church, Jackson, 6-8 p.m., on Oct. 31. For additional information call (601) 371-7955.

The Sons of Faith will be featured in a gospel concert at Gatesville Church, Crystal Springs, Oct. 29, at the 11 a.m. worship service.

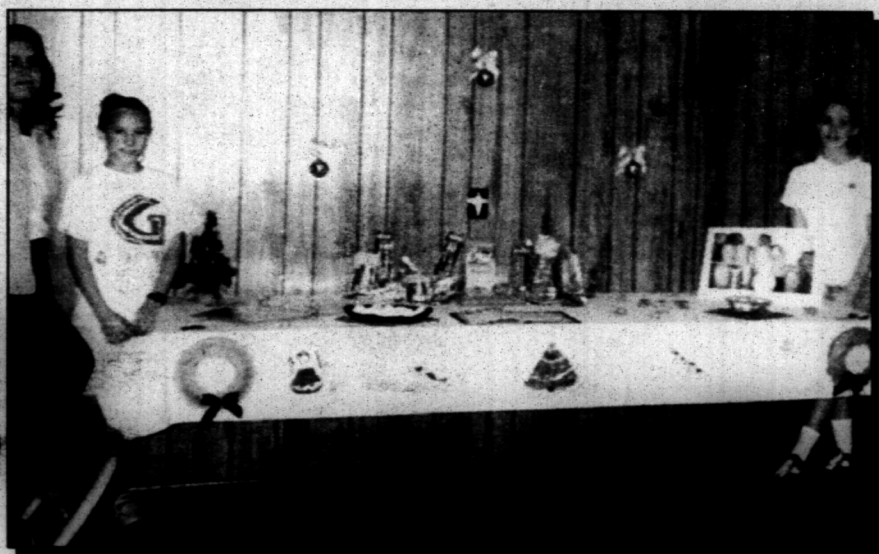
The 14th annual "Scenes of Christ," a depiction of the life and times of Jesus Christ, will be presented at Improve Church, Columbia, on Dec. 2 and 3. The times are 6-8 p.m.

HEART FOR THE RECORD



Acteens of Highland Church, Vicksburg

Acteens of Highland Church, Vicksburg, were recently honored at a reception at The Amick, and Jackie Richardson and Gayle Gettinger, leaders. Brian Ivey is pastor.

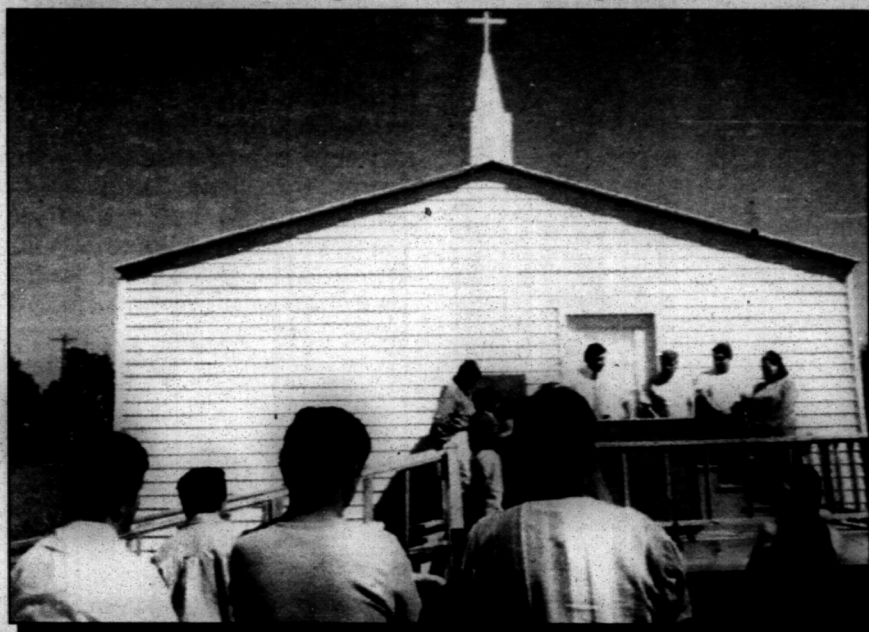


Christmas in August was held by the GAs of Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, on Aug. 27. GAs pictured are Emily Farmer and Jessi Robinson. Not pictured are Kelly Wadlington and Chelsea Freeman. GA director is LaShay Switzer.

Corners antebellum home. Pictured (from left, front row) are Brittany Breazeale, Amanda Gettinger, Johnna Harvey, Teri Burch; (back row) Ashlea Crocker, Marla Jean Richardson, Anna Larson, and Nicole Bilbo. Not pictured: Louann and Christen

Steve Walker, music evangelist from Pinola, will be in concert at Friendship Church, Brookhaven, Oct. 29 at 1:30 p.m. For more information call Friendship Church at (601) 833-5603. Jimmy Houston is pastor.

Walker will also be in concert Oct. 29 at Harmony Church, Crystal Springs, Copiah Association, at 6 p.m. For more information call Harmony Church at (601) 892-1121. Clark Stewart is pastor.



First baptismal service at the new facility of Iglesia Nueva Vida y Esperanza, Sunflower Association. Congregation and community look on as pastor Tino Trevino (in front of door) prepares to baptize. Pictured (from left) are Benjamin Garcia, Antonio Vasquez, and Veronica Zapata. Calvary Church, Parchman, sponsors the Hispanic mission.

STAFF CHANGES

A. Hilton Lane, retired North American Mission Board missionary is currently serving as interim pastor at First Church, Marks.

New Hope Church, Coffeeville, has called Billy Hill of Bruce as pastor effective in September. A native of Calhoun County, Hill previously served at Parker Church, Calhoun Association.

Freedom Church, Laurel, has called Charles Burks as associate pastor effective Sept. 25. He previously served as minister of youth and education at Hurley Church.

Green's Creek Church, Petal, has called Tim Nelson as minister of music effective Sept. 27. His previous place of service was Temple Church, Petal.

West End Church, Louisville, has called John L. Gainer as pastor effective Oct. 1. Having entered the ministry at age 17, Gainer has preached about 35 years in the surrounding counties of Monroe, Oktibbeha, and Choctaw. A native of Noxapater, Gainer received his education at Mississippi State University in secondary education and teaches English at Sturgis Attendance Center, Sturgis.

Scott Brady, minister of youth, Pleasant Ridge Church, Dumas, has been called to pastor Canaan Church, Ashland, effective Oct. 8. Brady was ordained at Pleasant Ridge Church on Oct. 8. Don Wilson is pastor of Pleasant Ridge Church.

a.m., followed by fellowship dinner; Joel Hudson, pastor; Rick Holifield, minister of music.

Macedonia, Meridian: Nov. 5; 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall followed by singing; R. L. Hunnicutt, Kemper County, guest speaker; Jason C. Gross, pastor.

First, Edinburg: Nov. 5; services, 10:45 a.m.; dinner on the grounds and an afternoon singing featuring Born Again from Kosciusko and Next of Kin from Saltillo; revival, Nov. 5-10; Billy Henry is pastor.

HOMEcomings

Pine Grove, Ellisville: 110 years; Oct. 29; Joe Ratcliff, former pastor, morning message; dinner on the grounds and afternoon service at 1:30 p.m.; Byron Smith, music.

Park Haven, Laurel: Nov. 5; 10:35 a.m. with dinner on the grounds; Drew Blanton, guest speaker.

McDonald, Lena: Nov. 5; registration/fellowship, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch; singing, 1 p.m.; Jerry Williams and Wayne Freeman, pastors; for more information, contact Elaine Cockrell at (601) 654-7782.

New Hope, Mt. Olive: 119th anniversary; Nov. 5; service, 11

Jay Chance to head TRUST

The TRUST, the foundation for Baptist Health Systems, has recently received official notice of incorporation from the State of Mississippi.

As a corporation, the TRUST will be able to increase its efforts to fund needed programs throughout the health system. Baptist Health Systems is the parent company of Baptist

Chance

Medical Center and a number of related health services throughout central Mississippi.

The TRUST was established in 1994. Leading the TRUST as president will be Jay Chance, who had served as Executive Vice President since 1995.

Chance was recently promoted into the new position by the TRUST Board of Regents after they approved a new set of bylaws. Chance, who has more than 25 years of development experience, said he hopes to increase the foundation's fundraising work as it builds on Baptist's 90 years of healthcare.

Chance has previously served in development positions at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas and at California Baptist University. Among his immediate goals for the organization, he noted, is to achieve full endowment of operating costs, thus ensuring that 100% of future gifts go directly to projects.

To become a member of Healthcare Partners, a donor recognition program, or for more information about The TRUST, call (601) 968-1489.

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NAMES IN THE NEWS



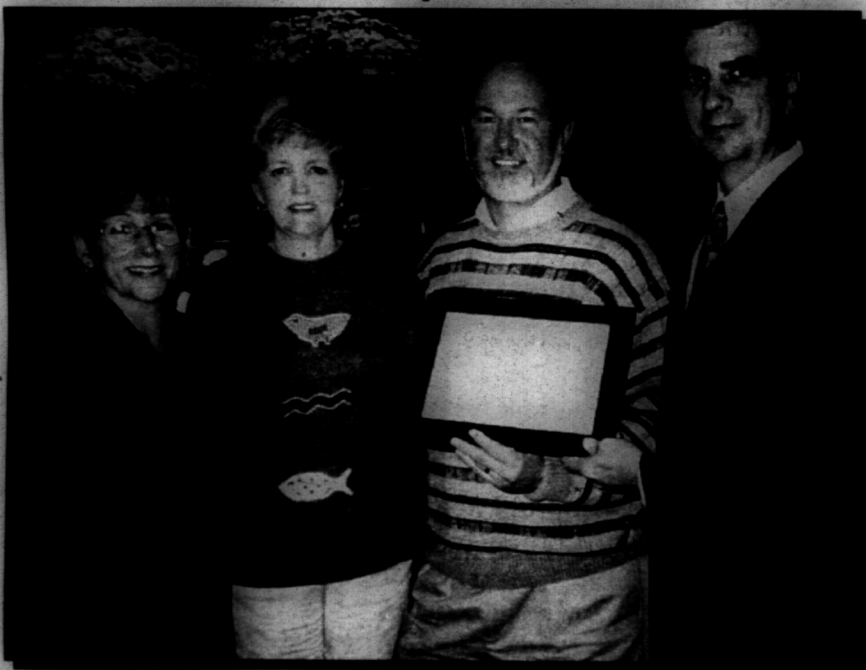
Powell and Stroo

Revival results

North Morton (Scott): Sept. 24-28; nine conversions; Don Taylor, evangelist; Gary Wyatt, pastor.

County Line Church, Overt, recently licensed Jerry Stroo to the ministry. Pictured (from left) are Tyler Powell, interim pastor; and Stroo.

First Church, Kosciusko, licensed Gene Richardson to the ministry on Oct. 8. Richardson (second from right) is pictured with his wife Janice, and Barry C. Corbett, pastor of First Church, Kosciusko, and his wife Denise.



D. Corbett, The Richardsons, and B. Corbett

REVIVAL DATES

Barnes Crossing Church, Belden: Oct. 30-Nov. 3; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Clyde Lane Patton, Booneville, evangelist; J. D. Johnson, pastor.

Janice, Brooklyn: Oct. 29-Nov. 1; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch, and afternoon singing; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Richard Miley, Hattiesburg, evangelist; Mitch Osborne, music; Melanie Boyd, pianist; Bob Goolsby, pastor.

First, Edinburg: Nov. 5-10; Sunday, homecoming; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, evangelist; Billy Henry, pastor.

Pleasant Hill, Quitman: Oct. 29-Nov. 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Bill Britt with Bill Britt Crusade, evangelist; For more information, contact the church at (601) 776-3371.

Park Haven, Laurel: Nov. 6-8; 7 p.m. nightly; Roger Ivy, evangelist.

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Immanuel Church, Greenwood, honored Dolly McBride, church secretary of 27 years, with Dolly McBride Appreciation Day. She was honored by the church with a new ministry in her name, The Dolly McBride Visual Outreach Ministry. "Our church has purchased some equipment and tapes to record

our services and these tapes will be carried into the nursing homes and the homes of elderly and shut-ins," said Danny Irvin, pastor of Immanuel Church.



Anderson and Ellzey



The Howells and Smith

our services and these tapes will be carried into the nursing homes and the homes of elderly and shut-ins," said Danny Irvin, pastor of Immanuel Church.

First Church, Pascagoula, honored Iris Anderson on Aug. 27 with a retirement reception. Following the reception Anderson presented an organ concert. She became church organist on January 1, 1969 and is presently serving the church

as interim organist. Rex Yancey is pastor of First Church. Pictured with Anderson (background) is Ron Ellzey, chairman of the personnel committee.

Magee's Creek Church, (Waltham Association) ordained Randy Howell as deacon. He is the third generation to serve as deacon at Magee's Creek. Howell is pictured with his wife Regina, father Hugh, and Jimmy T. Smith Jr., pastor.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Blue Mountain College (BMC) Department of Music will present the fall choral concert on Oct. 26 at 7:30 p.m. in Garrett Hall Auditorium. The concert will feature the BMC Chorale, under the direction of Larry W. Newell. For more information call BMC at (662) 685-4771, ext. 163.

Martin Jean, concert organist, will be presented in a recital on Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m. in Provine Chapel on Mississippi College (MC) campus. Jean is associate professor of organ at the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music. He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan. For more information, call the MC music department at (601) 925-3440.

The Board of Ministerial Education awarded this year's Therman Bryant Scholarship to Leslie Bennett of Diamondhead. Bennett is a sophomore

Christian Studies major at Mississippi College. The Therman Bryant Scholarship fund was established in 1977 by the Cooperative Missions Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and funded by the gifts from the Bryant family and friends. Pictured (from left) are Bennett and Ruthie Courtney of the Board of Ministerial Education.



Bennett and Courtney

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BE PREPARED

Editor:

As a teenager growing up in Louisiana, I heard Catholic priests condemned for reading the Bible in Latin. It was said they did not encourage the common people to read the Bible; if it were read in Latin, then the priest could interpret it according to the dictates of the pope.

In the October 12 issue of The Baptist Record, Russell Bradford condemns the use of the New International Version (NIV). He says it has "resulted in a doctrinally deficient version of the Bible." Yet he quotes no passages to support his argument. He does refer to "the Sodom story" as an example.

I studied Gen. 19 in both the NIV and the King James Version (KJV) and could find no difference except for modern language. Bradford cites the "many changes in its wording." Yes, in v. 5 in the KJV the phrase "that we may know them" does not mean they wanted to make their acquaintance; it means what v. 5 in the

NIV says, "that we can have sex with them." In v. 9 the KJV says, "This one fellow came in to sojourn." The NIV v. 9 says, "This fellow came here as an alien." Which is easier to understand?

The KJV is beautifully written and understood by those who have grown up with Baptist heritages, but if we want to reach a lost world which did not grow up reading seventeenth century English, then we had better be prepared to present God's Word in modern English.

Betty Allen
Columbia

READ THE REPORT

Editor:

It is unfortunate that you did not address the issues of concern to Texas Baptists in your publication. It makes it seem that they were working on a whim. Nothing could be further from the truth. I urge Mississippi Baptists to inform themselves on these issues by downloading the complete report and recommen-

dations from Baptiststandard.com. It is an incredible document, stirring, painful, well researched, and prayerfully written. The compilation of letters between the pastor of First Church in Shreveport, La., and New Orleans Seminary alone should be required reading for any thinking Baptist.

I am the product of Baptist missions in Puerto Rico and I thus abhor ecclesiastical authority and place my hope and faith only in the Living Christ. In the early 1990's I wrote to Morris Chapman, with whom I shared many a prayer meeting at Mississippi College, and urged him to practice a generosity of spirit commensurate with our calling. Obviously, my entreaties went unheeded. True servants of the Lord were mistreated, ugly agendas were put into place, and arrogance became the word of the day.

Texas Baptists were particularly mistreated. I praise them for their courage and determination to set things right, and may God have mercy on all of us for what is about to happen to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jose Orraca
Kent, CT

CREATION MESSAGE

Editor:

For some years I have followed the ministry of the Institute for Creation Research through their hands-on programs, videos, and books.

Several weeks ago I noticed

Michael's Watch



But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." - Jude 1:9

Michael's Watch is a support group whose sole purpose and mission is to offer emotional, mental, and spiritual support for those whose lives have been affected by family members or loved ones involved in the homosexual lifestyle.

Michael's Watch Group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month at First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Additional information may be obtained by calling **First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi** at (662) 773-6246.

in their newsletter that there will be a guest lecturer in our area who will be presenting a strong creation message. In the Jackson area, Mike Riddle will be speaking in the chapel of Reformed Theological Seminary on October 28 at 2 p.m.

I do not like controversy for the sake of controversy, but I do think that it is important to be able to clearly express our beliefs from a biblical standpoint, and it is for this reason that I recommend these lectures to your readers. Other locations include First Church, Yazoo City (662-746-2471) on October 29, and Covenant Presbyterian Church in Louisville (662-773-5282) on October 30. Additional lecture locations and dates may be found at www.icr.org.

Carolyn Ellis
Clinton

HOLD FIRM

Editor:

As a Christian who has been 'spoon-fed' neo-Darwinian evolution in graduate school, I should like to answer the guest opinion by D. L. Williams of Hattiesburg.

In regard to fossil record, Williams said intermediate forms are becoming increasingly available to us. No, they're not. Even secular scientists are candidly admitting the fossil record doesn't support the strange dogma of macroevolution. In 1998 evolutionist A. G. Fisher said, "Both the origin of life and the major groups of animals remain unknown."

I would like Williams to list 30 or 50 successive fossil species clearly showing major genetic change. Such an inventory would validate macroevolution and effectively bar the doors of the Institute for Creation Research. In the meantime we concur with evolutionist Montgomery Slatkin who said in 1994, "The fossil record has always been a problem."

I urge the readers of The Baptist Record to hold firm to a literal interpretation and understanding of Genesis. After all, isn't that what evolutionists do with Darwin's book?

Frank Sherwin, zoologist
Institute for Creation Research
Santee, CA



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Accompanist Symposium scheduled

Pistons, Pianos, and More, a national symposium for church accompanists, will be held November 11-14 at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth. Faculty will include Al Travis, Elizabeth Hostetter, Jerry Aultman, Cindy Berry, C.L. Bass, and Michael Cox. An opening concert will be conducted by Stephen Nielson. Registration of \$125 includes three meals. For more information or to register, call (615) 251-2964. E-mail: mkirkla@lifeway.com.

We listened.

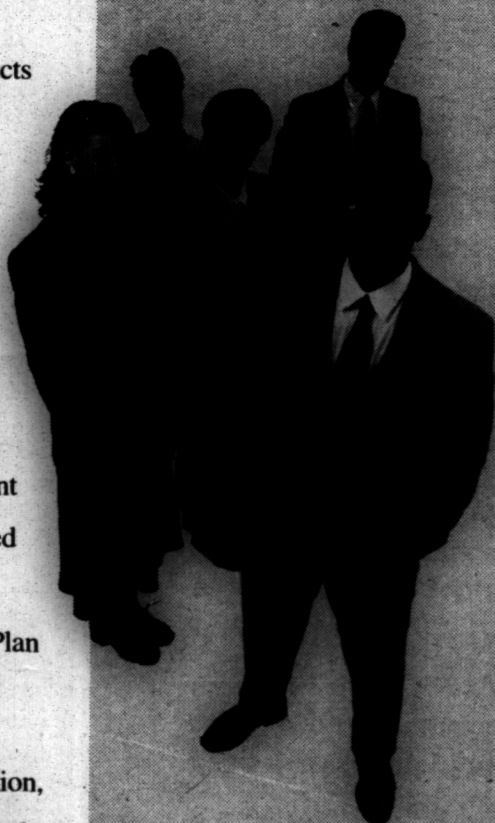
For several years the Annuity Board received requests from ministers and church employees about the need for additional insurance products.

We listened and we are responding.

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Life Chain coming to Hattiesburg

The 2000 Pine Belt Life Chain rally in Hattiesburg to protest legalized abortion will be held from 2-3:30 p.m. on November 5, according to Kathy Stevens, state director for Concerned Women of America. The Life Chain will begin at the intersection of Hardy Street and Highway 49, and will continue west along Hardy Street.

"We have had over 1,000 Pine Belt residents participate in the past," Stevens said. For more information on the annual event, contact Stevens at (601) 794-5023. E-mail: cwaofms@netdoor.com.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need your (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Merritt accepting nominations for SBC posts

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Nominations for four key committees of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) are being received through Nov. 15 by SBC President James Merritt.

The committees are:

- Committee on Committees, which selects members of the Committee on Nominations who, in turn, recommend trustees for SBC entities to the SBC annual meeting; the Resolutions Committee; Credentials Committee; and the Tellers Committee.

In addition to having "a very high level of spiritual commitment, first to our Lord and secondly to our convention," Merritt said nominees should:

- "have a burning passion for reaching people for Christ by carrying out the mandate of the Great Commission."
- "be fully supportive of our 2000 edition of the Baptist Faith and Message" statement of beliefs.
- "be a faithful contributor to the Cooperative Program,"

the channel by which Southern Baptist churches support the convention's international and national missions and ministries.

Nomination forms are available from the Atlanta-area church where Merritt is pastor: First Baptist Church Snellville, P.O. Box 647, Snellville, GA 30078. Completed forms should be return to his office.

"All nominations should be received in my office by Nov. 15," Merritt said. "Nominees should be confirmed for attendance at the convention," June 12-13 in New Orleans. Nominees will be responsible for covering their own expenses at the SBC annual meeting.

"Should a nominee only want to be considered for a specific [committee], that preference should be so noted on the nomination form," Merritt said. "They should also be aware that their names are being presented only as a recommendation at this point.

Every name will receive serious consideration, but some may be asked to serve at another point in time."

2000 January Bible Study to examine Book of James

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — How to Live by Faith in a Secular World: A Study of the Book of James, is the topic of the January (formerly Winter) Bible Study (JBS) for 2001.

Through eight chapters, each dedicated to Christian fundamentals outlined in James' letter, this year's study encourages participants to: Learn from Test and Trials, Treat All People Right, Seek What's Best For Others, Pray Confidently, and more.

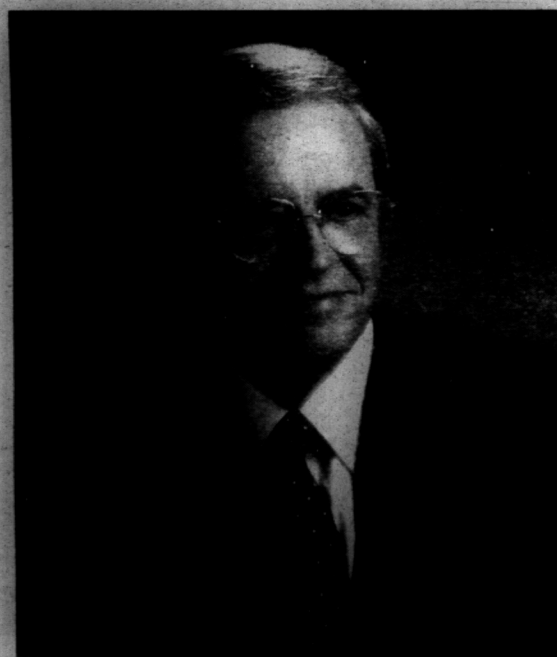
Plus, with its interactive format, this resource challenges readers to apply the Word to their lives and take up James' challenge to "Do not merely listen to the word ... Do what it says" (James 1:22).

The January Bible Study Planning and Promotional Pack is available to help churches plan and promote JBS.

In the same way that using the Family Bible Study series in Sunday School allows the entire church family to study the same topic, churches can include the entire church family in this study of James.

The How to Live by Faith in a Secular World materials for January Bible Study can be ordered toll-free by phone at (800) 458-2772, by fax at (615) 251-5933, by e-mail at customerService@lifeway.com and at LifeWay Christian Stores.

Meet God on a Mountaintop



We've all heard the Scriptural accounts of dramatic mountaintop encounters with God. Now best-selling author and beloved pastor, Charles Stanley uses this theme as the basis for insightful and uplifting daily devotions. *Into His Presence* takes you away from the spiritual status quo of life and to a higher level where you will experience revelation and transformation.

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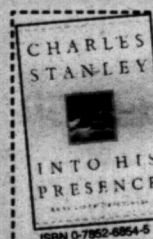


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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The family connection

Ruth 4:1-3, 5-6, 9-17

By Heather Cumberland

Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, had lived a tough life. She lost her husband and her two sons. The only things she had left were her two daughters-in-law.

After the death of her sons, Naomi instructed Ruth and Orpah (her daughters-in-law) to go back to their families and marry again so that the Lord would bless them with children. She did not think it was right for them to have to stay with her when they were still young and could re-marry and bear children.

Orpah kissed Naomi goodbye and headed back home, but Ruth clung to her (1:14). When the barley harvest came, Ruth followed Naomi to Bethlehem. When they arrived there, Ruth

asked Naomi's permission to glean the barley fields. Naomi granted her request and Ruth went out to the fields.

Naomi had a kinsman (relative) of her husband in Bethlehem. His name was Boaz and he was a very wealthy man. However, Naomi did not tell Ruth about this relative before she went out to glean the fields.

Chapter 2 tells us that when Ruth made her way to Boaz's portion of the fields, he noticed her. He had compassion on her and he instructed his servants to leave enough grain behind so that when Ruth gleaned the field, she would have enough to take home to Naomi (2:15-17).

When Ruth went home to

Naomi, she told her about Boaz. Naomi told Ruth that this was one of their closest relatives (2:20).

Naomi, still concerned about Ruth having to spend the rest of her life with no husband, began working on a way to make Boaz a kinsman-redeemer for Ruth. A kinsman-redeemer was a

man, usually the closest living relative of the deceased, who made a vow to redeem the widow and take care of her, her family, and her land.

Naomi gave Ruth instructions about how to get Boaz's attention (3:3-15). Ruth did all that she was instructed to do and as a result, Ruth found favor in the eyes of Boaz.

There was one problem, however. Although Boaz was a close relative, he was not the closest one alive. The only way Boaz could become Ruth's kinsman-redeemer was if the closest living relative did not desire to be her kinsman-redeemer.

This is where our lesson

begins this week. Boaz called a meeting of the elders of the city and the closest living relative of Naomi, whose name is not given. He told them that this relative, if he desires to be Ruth's kinsman-redeemer, must buy the field from the hand of Naomi, marry Ruth, and give her children (4:5).

Naomi's relative immediately spoke up and said that he could not make that kind of commitment and he gave Boaz the right to redeem Ruth (4:6). With this, Boaz pledged to become Ruth's kinsman-redeemer (4:9-10).

Boaz and Ruth married and had a son named Obed. Matthew 1:5-6 tells us that Boaz was the father of Obed, Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David (who eventually became King David). Several generations later, from this same lineage, Jesus is born.

The interesting thing about this story, in my opinion, is that Jesus comes from this lineage, and the similarity between the story of Ruth and the story of

Jesus is so clear. Ruth needed someone to redeem her and take care of her so Boaz took it upon himself to do so.

Jesus, in this same way, is our redeemer. A redeemer is one who saves or rescues. Just as Boaz saved Ruth from having to spend the rest of her life with no husband or children, Jesus saves us from a life of loneliness, sorrow, and death.

I will never get tired of hearing about people trusting Jesus to redeem them. Just this past weekend my husband got a call that one of his youth accepted Christ. How we rejoice with this young man who has trusted Christ as his savior!

You may be at a point in your life where, like Ruth, you need someone that you can trust to take care of your needs. If you have been feeling lonely and empty, talk to someone you trust about Jesus. He is the only one who can give you hope, joy, and peace while loving you unconditionally.

Cumberland is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Learning from others

Acts 11:19-30

By Wayne VanHorn

We continue our unit of study, "Growing in Understanding," with a look at the need to learn from others. Spiritual maturity ought to be the goal of every Christian. The maturation process involves learning from those who have grown spiritually themselves.

Become Christians (11:19-21). Luke reminds us that the initial dispersion of the believers into broadening geographic circles was the result of the martyrdom of Stephen and persecution against the Church (v. 19).

The believers spread to Phoenicia (modern day Lebanon), Cyprus (the prominent island in the eastern Mediterranean), and Antioch (the third largest city in the Roman empire with a population of about 500,000).

Luke indicates that the mes-

sage was shared primarily with Jews (v. 19b), but some disciples were beginning to apply the message of Cornelius's conversion by sharing with Gentiles (compare v. 18 with v. 20). "The Lord's hand was with them" is a reference to God's power and blessing and the result was the addition of a great number of believers.

Accept encouragement (11:22-24). We are now given our third glimpse of Joseph of Cyprus, whom the apostles named Barnabas, meaning "Son of Encouragement" (4:36; 9:27).

Why did the Jerusalem church send Barnabas instead of one of the apostles? Scholars answer the question in a variety of ways, all of which are speculative.

Perhaps the apostles were away from the Jerusalem church when the news from

Antioch arrived. Perhaps they were present but deemed the needs of the mother church more pressing at the time.

At any rate, the choice of Barnabas was the right one. He was from Cyprus as were some of the believers who were witnessing to the Gentiles (v. 20). His demonstrated ability to bring outsiders into the church (9:27) qualified him to be the ambassador from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Barnabas was glad to see God's grace at work in Antioch. Rather than hinder in any way the growth of the church, Barnabas encouraged them "to remain true to the Lord" (v. 23; NIV). "To remain true" (NIV) or "cleave" (KJV) renders the present active infinitive form of *prosmeno*, meaning "to abide or remain with." The present infinitive form stresses the need for unbroken action in terms of staying with the Lord.

Verse 24 rounds out our picture of Barnabas. The reference to Barnabas as a "good" man is taken by some scholars to mean

"competent." Minimally, "good" points to his high moral character. He was also full of the Holy Spirit and faith.

Luke seeks to remind us that apart from the Spirit the true work of evangelizing and training cannot be accomplished. Through the work of Barnabas and the other Antiochene Christians, many people were brought to the Lord (v. 24).

Receive nurturing (11:25-26). Barnabas needed help with the burgeoning work at Antioch. He sought out Saul of Tarsus (11:25), whom we know better as Paul. Through Barnabas God was pursuing his plans for Paul (see Acts 9:15).

Luke depicts Barnabas and Paul working side-by-side in Antioch for a year teaching the believers and helping them grow in their understanding of Jesus. Barnabas gave Paul valuable experience in teaching others about Jesus. Apparently as these "great numbers" of disciples applied what they had learned about Christ they earned for themselves the nickname "Christians," or "Christ-people."

Show signs of maturing

(11:27-30). Spiritual maturity can be measured in many ways. One of the best ways to measure it is in the area of ministering to people's needs. Luke informs us that a famine, prophesied by Agabus (vv. 27-28; see also 21:10), came about during the rule of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 41-54).

The Jerusalem church was hard hit and the Christians at Antioch decided to send "relief" (Greek *diakonia*) to them (11:29). The main point of these verses is to demonstrate that the year long teaching ministry of Barnabas and Paul resulted in Christian growth and spiritual maturity marked most notably by the volunteer support by believers in Antioch for believers in Judea. Each one did what he could. Barnabas and Saul (Paul) were selected to carry the gift to Jerusalem (11:30). F.F. Bruce dates this Jerusalem visit to A.D. 46 and associates it with Galatians 2:1.

We too demonstrate our spiritual maturity as we seek to help those "less blessed" than we are by giving as we are able.

VanHorn is pastor of First Church, Columbia.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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Clue: Y = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Galatians Two: Twenty.

O'Hair hoax going high-tech over Internet

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (ABP) — A decades-old hoax about a well-known atheist seeking a ban on religious broadcasting has caught up with the information age.

The urban legend about religion and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has circulated through the mail and word of mouth since 1975. It re-emerged recently as an e-mail hoax focusing on the CBS program "Touched by an Angel."

"CBS will be forced to discontinue 'Touched By an Angel' for using the word GOD in every program," reads the e-mail hoax. "[The] petition, number 2493, would ultimately pave the way to stop the reading of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior on the airwaves of America."

The hoax asserts self-proclaimed atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair has received "287,000 signatures" with a petition that will "ultimately" ban religious programming.

"Sunday worship services being broadcast on the radio or by television will be stopped. This group is also campaigning to remove all Christmas programs and Christmas carols from public schools! You as a Christian can help!" states the e-mail.

O'Hair has been missing and presumed dead since 1995, according to About.com's "Urban Legends" Web page.

The petition, "routinely assigned the number RM-2493," was in fact not filed by O'Hair but by Jeremy D. Lansman and Lorenzo W. Milam in 1974, according to the FCC.

RM-2493 asked the FCC to explore operating practices of religious stations. It also asked that no new requests for licenses be granted to religious stations until after the completion of the FCC inquiry.

The Lansman-Milam petition was denied on Aug. 1, 1975, according to the FCC. Because of millions of inquiries

inspired by the hoax during two decades of circulation, the FCC has published information about laws regarding religious broadcasting in newspapers, religious publications, TV Guide, and Time magazine.

"There is no federal law or regulation that gives the FCC the authority to prohibit radio and television stations from presenting religious programs," according to the FCC "Consumer Facts" Web page. "Broadcasters, not the FCC nor any other governmental agency, have the responsibility for selecting the programming that is aired by their stations."

Such hoaxes cause unnecessary traffic for organizations like the FCC, wrote David Emery in an article for About.com.

"E-mail hoaxes have become so prevalent that they're regarded in some quarters as a threat to network integrity comparable to that of actual computer viruses," wrote Emery. "The threat posed

to individual users is less dramatic, but in these days of ever-increasing spam people are getting fed up with the amount of garbage clogging their inboxes."

The hoaxes survive because of "new and inexperienced users unfamiliar with Netiquette and unaware of how rampant misinformation is on the Internet," wrote Emery.

He suggested that computer users become familiar with anti-hoax resources and have "cut-and-paste templates" ready to send in answer to e-mail hoaxes.

"There are few solutions at this point beyond redoubling our efforts to expand awareness and change people's habits," Emery wrote.

Cliff Vaughn, project coordinator for the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville, Tenn., also suggested thinking twice before forwarding e-mail.

"Don't assume your friends always pass along legitimate stories," Vaughn said.

Group denied school access to get day in court

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear the appeal of a Christian youth organization that was denied use of school facilities.

While non-religious groups such as the Boy Scouts and 4-H Club were able to use school facilities after hours, the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals said the Good

News Club does not qualify under a New York school district's policy.

Milford Central School District has since 1992 had a policy allowing local residents to use school facilities for social, civic, and recreational meetings and entertainment events.

The policy states, however, that school premises "shall not be used by an individual or organization for religious purposes."

In 1996, the Good News Club — affiliated with a Christian missionary organization known as Child Evangelism Fellowship — applied to use the school's facilities to have "a fun time of singing songs, hearing [a] Bible lesson, and memorizing Scripture."

The club said its program typically begins by calling attendance and awarding a treat to each child who can recite a Bible verse. The children sing songs, learn Bible stories, and memorize Bible verses and close with a prayer.

After reviewing the club's program materials, the district's interim superintendent said the proposed activities were not merely discussion of secular subjects from a religious perspective, but "were in fact the equivalent of religious instruction itself."

The Milford Board of Education denied the application, and the club filed a complaint with a U.S. district court in March 1997, charging its rights of free speech, equal protection, and religious freedom had been violated. The district court ruled in favor of the school district and the 2nd Circuit upheld the ruling.

The 2nd Circuit said activities of the club "fall clearly on the side of religious instruction and prayer." The court ruling details lesson plans of the Christian club, including one that distinguished between "saved" and "unsaved" children. The unsaved are "given an opportunity later in class today to believe on Jesus."

A dissenting opinion from the 2nd Circuit, however, said, "Even if we could not say whether the club's message conveyed religious content or religious viewpoints on otherwise-permissible content, we should err on the side of free speech." It also stated that "no one should be surprised if a religious viewpoint on morality looks very like religion itself."

The case is Good News Club vs. Milford Central School. A date for oral arguments has not been set, but is likely to take place in 2001.

College Student Conference draws 1,400 people

